

Application No.: 10/618,305
Art Unit: 3617

Attorney Docket No. 22501.00
Confirmation No. 4330

REMARKS

By the present amendment, Applicant has amended Claims 1 and 5, and canceled Claim 4. Claims 1-3 and 5-17 remain pending in the present application. Claim 1 is the sole independent claim.

In the recent Office Action the Examiner rejected Claims 1-3 and 13-17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boyd (U.S. Patent No. 5,337,774) in view of Sholler (U.S. Patent No. 6,206,740), or further in view of Fletcher, Jr. (U.S. Patent No. 5,845,684) or Gervais (U.S. Patent No. 5,362,265). The Examiner indicated that Claims 4-12 would be allowable if amended to include all of the limitations of the base claim and of any intervening claims.

The Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter is noted with appreciation. In this regard, Applicant has amended independent Claim 1 to incorporate the allowable subject matter of Claim 4. Applicant respectfully submits that independent Claim 1, as amended, and corresponding dependent Claims 2-3 and 5-17 are allowable over the prior art of record.

The Examiner indicated that the "Other Documents" listed on the Information Disclosure Statement were not considered, apparently because legible copies the listed documents were not made available. It is noted that these documents were filed with the original statement and the application. However, these documents are submitted with the present amendment for the Examiner's convenience. (Note that the Yardarm reference has been reprinted from the Internet).

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For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. If such is not the case, the Examiner is requested to kindly contact the undersigned in an effort to satisfactorily conclude the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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RCL:dht/ckf